

**Palm Springs, CA** - Delivering the keynote address to the Aviation Noise and Air Quality Symposium this morning, U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) outlined new technology and procedures to reduce noise and air pollution and praised the partnership between the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) and the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) for their work toward achieving these goals.

Congressman Kirk was joined at the symposium by Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene Mulder, who chairs the ONCC. The four day symposium focused on ways to reduce the environmental impact of aircraft noise on communities bordering major airports. Kirk, whose district includes several suburbs in close proximity to O'Hare International Airport, has worked since first-elected to Congress in 2000 with Mayor Mulder, ONCC and NASA to advance new technologies that reduce air and noise pollution.

"I am encouraged by the partnership between communities and federal agencies that is producing results important to improving quality of life in our hometowns," said Kirk referring to the successful partnership between NASA and ONCC. "Aircraft noise is a critical national environmental hazard. As we modernize our aviation infrastructure, it is vital that local communities assist in developing meaningful methods of reducing the impact of aircraft noise on our neighborhoods."

NASA is working on aviation noise reduction technology through their Quiet Aircraft Technology (QAT) program. The program's goals are to identify and develop technologies capable of reducing aircraft noise by 10 decibels by 2007. One technology Kirk advocates is a Continuous Descent Approach. This technology allows pilots to fly computer-driven steeper runway approaches. A steeper approach reduces noise pollution by keeping aircraft at higher altitudes for longer periods, reducing required engine power during descent and delaying flap extension thus reducing airframe noise. Recent testing of Continuous Descent Approach showed noise reductions of three to six decibels on average.

"Continuous Descent Approach is already required for many aircraft at London's Heathrow Airport," said Kirk. "Implementing this procedure at O'Hare will greatly reduce noise in our surrounding communities."

Kirk also highlighted other technologies NASA is developing with the FAA including:

Fan Blade Shaping- Using the swept fan blade design can reduce the shock waves in front of the rotor reducing fan tone noise by two to four decibels.

Chevron-Shaped Exhaust Nozzles- Redesigning the shape of the engine exhaust nozzle, the noise can be converted to a higher frequency which is attenuated by the atmosphere to a greater extent and therefore is not as loud when it reaches the ground.

Advanced Auto-throttle Systems- Boeing has developed the Quiet Climb System that automatically reduces throttle to precisely match takeoff profiles that are quieter and more efficient than manual throttle adjustments during takeoff and climb.

Congressman Kirk also highlighted the work of Boeing on its new 787 “Dreamliner” aircraft. The 787 is projected to be so quiet that no sound over 65 decibels will leave the airport. Kirk applauded the work of Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene Mulder in advancing new technology and fostering cooperation between local communities and federal agencies. As Chairwoman of the ONCC, Mayor Mulder has testified before Congress to highlight the importance of having a community group such as the ONCC, provide institutional knowledge of surrounding areas and local concerns. The ONCC’s technical committee closely examines and promotes the use of cutting-edge technologies that will help reduce aircraft noise. The ONCC also oversees noise insulation programs for both residents and schools in 30 municipalities surrounding O’Hare International Airport.

As moderator of the symposium’s Land Use Planning general session, Mulder encouraged local land use planners and airport planners to cooperate with each other when dealing with airport expansion.

“Communities need to work cooperatively with all involved parties to achieve a balanced airport compatibility plan,” said Mayor Mulder. “Airport planners need to be aware of local land use planning and local land use planners need to be aware of airport master planning. These two groups need to come to the table to work together.”

Kirk reminded attendees that with airline travel increasing, the need for new noise reduction technology is more important than ever. “Communities I represent in northern Illinois are like many towns and cities across the United States. As air travel increases and airports look to

expand, it is absolutely critical that NASA and community organizations like ONCC, continue to work together on new technology that reduces the environmental impact of noise and air pollution on neighborhoods surrounding the airfields. I will continue my work to ensure the dialogue remains open and our communities are well-represented in the process.”

Contact: Matt Towson  
847-940-0202  
cell: 773-454-5396